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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CONAKRY 000225

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PMIL](#) [PREL](#) [GV](#)
SUBJECT: SOLDIERS MUTINY, THREATEN MARCH ON CENTRAL BASE

Classified By: POL/ECON CHIEF SHANNON CAZEAU FOR REASON 1.4 B AND D

11. (C) SUMMARY. A group of soldiers, which appears to be fairly well organized with significant internal backing, seized control of the military camp Alpha Yaya Diallo late on May 25. There has been intermittent shooting in Conakry's military camps, as well as reports of similar activity in up country military bases. The mutineers are currently calling for the immediate dismissal of the Minister of Defense, and threatening to march on the Camp Touare if their demands are not met by noon. END SUMMARY.

SOLDIERS TAKE CONTROL OF MILITARY CAMP

12. (C) Beginning late in the evening on May 25, there has been intermittent shooting in Conakry's military camps. A significant group of soldiers, which appears to include most enlisted personnel as well as officers through the rank of major, seized control of Camp Alpha Yaya Diallo, which is located near the G'Bessia International Airport. According to sources, the mutineers are demanding the dismissal of the current Minister of Defense, General Baillo Diallo; the release of detained soldiers held at Kassa Island for alleged human rights abuses in early 2007; payment of the 5 million GnF (approximately \$1,250) due to each soldier, as part of the Bulletin Rouge; and an increase in the government rice subsidy for soldiers. Neither the leader of this mutiny, nor the soldiers' negotiator, have been identified.

13. (SBU) The Guinean Government (GoG) initially sent General Mamadou Sampil to negotiate with the soldiers, but the mutineers instead held him hostage for several hours on May 126. Recent reports indicate that General Sampil has been released and is unharmed. General Joint Chief of Staff Camara is now negotiating on behalf of the GoG.

14. (U) Paris AFP (World Service) reported that the mutineers shot and wounded Major Korka Diallo, who is in charge of military finances.

15. (C) President Lansana Conte was reportedly at Camp Alpha Yaya Diallo yesterday evening for several hours, but then left the camp. International press reported that on May 27, Conte met with Prime Minister Ahmed Tidiane Souare, the Minister of Defense, several other military officers, and the Minister of Finance to discuss the situation.

THREATENING TO MARCH ON CAMP TOUARE

16. (C) Around 10:00 on May 27, sources reported that the mutineers have demanded that the Minister of Defense be dismissed by 12:00 local time. They have reportedly

threatened to march on Camp Touare, the central military base located in downtown Conakry, if the demand is not met. Various reports indicate that the mutineers are likely well-armed, including heavy weapons, and capable of carrying out the threat. There are also unsubstantiated rumors that the mutineers are threatening to march on the national news agency, Radio Television Guinean (RTG), which is across the street from the Embassy.

17. (C) Over the last few days, there have also been reports of military gunfire in the cities of Kindia, N'Zerekore, and Kankan. Contacts reported that some soldiers up country were not reporting for duty. Sources have indicated that trucks of reinforcements will be driving down from the military base in Kindia, but that they will probably not arrive until after 14:00. It is unclear as to whether these reinforcements are coming to defend Camp Touare, or to reinforce the mutineers at Camp Alpha Yaya Diallo.

SECURITY SITUATION

18. (C) The situation in Conakry is relatively calm, but tense. Cars were lined up at gas stations this morning, suggesting a certain degree of uncertainty among the general population. There are still reports of intermittent gunshots at Camp Alpha Yaya. Currently, there are no roadblocks in the city, and no other signs of military deployments. A small detachment of gendarmes has been seen at RTG headquarters.

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LOCAL PRESS

19. (SBU) There has been little coverage of the mutiny in the local press, with the exception of the internet news sites, which lean toward sensational, rumor-based reporting. However, RTG (the national news network) broadcast an official GoG statement around 7:00 on May 27. The GoG urged the mutineers to dialogue with the government and avoid any disruptive activities. The GoG reminded soldiers that the Bulletin Rouge never existed, but that the 2 million GnF per soldier payment in early January was distributed in good faith in order to resolve any lingering concerns over the issue. Finally, the GoG stated that the detained soldiers on Kassa Island have already been released. (COMMENT. Embassy has not yet confirmed whether they have actually been released. END COMMENT).

COMMENT

110. (C) The situation remains tense, and everyone seems to be in a "wait and see" mode. From the outside, the mutiny appears to be fairly well organized, with significant internal support. Contacts indicate that there are only about 300 people at Camp Touare, mostly unarmed, and that the camp will likely not be able to defend itself against the mutineers if they decide to take it over. The GoG may try to appease the mutineers by dismissing the Minister of Defense. However, such a move could encourage the soldiers to continue the mutiny in order to achieve all of their objectives. END COMMENT.

CARTER